UNITED NATIONS

CERD

International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.
GENERAL

CERD/C/222/Add.1
11 February 1993

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Forty-second session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Eighth periodic reports of States parties due in 1992

Addendum

SUDAN *

[25 January 1993]

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* This report contains the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth periodic reports of Sudan, which were due, respectively, on 20 April 1986, 20 April 1988, 20 April 1990 and 20 April 1992. For the third and fourth periodic reports submitted by the Government of Sudan and the summary records of meetings of the Committee at which those reports were considered, see:

Third periodic report - CERD/C/87/Add.1 (CERD/C/SR.580-581);
Fourth periodic report - CERD/C/114/Add.1/Rev.1 (CERD/C/SR.784-785).

GE.93-15521 (E)

PART I - GENERAL

1. The Sudan is the largest country in Africa, with an area of about 2.5 million km^2. The Sudan shares international borders with eight other countries, Egypt to the north, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Chad to the north-west, the Central African Republic and Zaire to the south-west, Uganda and Kenya to the south, and Ethiopia to the east, and faces Saudi Arabia across the Red Sea. The northern part of the country is an extension of the Sahara Desert, but towards the central part of the country the desert gradually gives way to dry Savannah, while the southern part of the country is typically tropical rain forest.

2. The Sudan's population, according to the 1983 census projections for 1990, is about 26.5 million, with 20 per cent of the population living in the urban centres and 80 per cent in the rural areas, the latter including nomads. Women and children make up more than 60 per cent of the population. The Sudan is a multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural society but the numerous enactments passed by the various legislative bodies of the Sudan (1956-1992) apply to all Sudanese alike and do not discriminate against any particular group.

3. In the administration of justice in the Sudan, under the new legal system based on Shari'a (Islamic Law), enough safeguards have been put in place to ensure that all Sudanese citizens enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms before the law, without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, skin colour or national origin. Some of these safeguards are as follows.

4. Under Article (4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1991, retrospective application of the law is prohibited, and the rule of law has thus been fully observed.

5. Under Article 4(C) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the accused is presumed innocent until the contrary is proved. From this presumption arises the responsibility of the police and the District Attorney to treat the accused humanely and to ensure a fair trial by the court.

6. Article (4) of the same Code prohibits compelling the accused to incriminate himself.

7. Under Article 69 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, it is obligatory for the District Attorney to check the custody cells and case diaries daily, in order to correct possible errors in procedures and ensure that accused or arrested persons are treated humanely.

8. The same Code further provides that no person should stay in custody, for purposes of investigation, for more than 24 hours. It also stipulates that, in the event of the transfer of the accused to another location, his family must be kept informed, and he should be brought to court immediately.

9. Under the Code mentioned above, all stages of police investigations must be carried out under the supervision of the District Attorney to ensure that no deviation from the due processes of justice occurs. For the same reason,

other provisions of the Code stipulate that no person can be tried twice for the same offence and that judges should not try cases involving their own interests.

10. Again under the Code of Criminal Procedure, the trial of the accused should be open to the public, unless the nature of the trial or its rules of procedure direct otherwise. Furthermore, the accused must be tried in his presence.

11. Possibly of even more importance in safeguarding the rights and equality of the Sudanese people before the law are the provisions of the State Security Law, 1990. This law was amended in 1991 in order to place under judicial supervision the exercise of the wide-ranging powers of arrest, detention and investigation enjoyed by security officers.

12. Until the promulgation of Shari'a (Islamic Law) in 1983, the legal system in operation in the Sudan was based on English Common Law. Despite controversy over the rigorous application of hudūd (the penalties prescribed under Shari'a) through the Criminal Code, Shari'a nevertheless remained the basis of the legal system in the Sudan from 1983 to 1989.

13. The laws which now form the basis of the Islamic legal system in the Sudan are: the Penal Code, 1991; the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1991; the Code of Civil Procedure, 1991; the Code of Judicial Procedure; the Law of Evidence, 1983; the Muslim Personal Law, 1991; the Public Order Local Act, 1992; the Civil Transactions Act, 1984; the Rents Act, 1991; and the Origin of Judicial Rules Act, 1983.

14. The criminal courts are constituted as follows: the High Court; the Court of Appeal; the General Criminal Court (Provincial Court); the First class Criminal Court (District Court); the Second class Criminal Court (District Court); the Third class Criminal Court (District Court); the Popular Criminal Court (Town and Village Court); and any special Criminal Court formed by order of the Chief Justice, under the Judiciary Authority Act, 1986, or formed under any other Law.

15. The civil courts are structured as follows: the High Court; the Court of Appeal; the Provincial Court; the District Court; and the Bench of Magistrates.

16. The State Security Law was amended to place the work of security officers under judicial supervision. The amendments also added new provisions which emphasize the importance of observing the rights of those under detention or investigation.

17. Under the new amendments, arrested persons should be informed of the reasons for their arrest. Such acts as torture and inhumane treatment of persons arrested have been prohibited. The latter have also been given the right to appeal to a judge in the event of any ill-treatment at the hands of the security officers. Security officers found guilty are punished and could get prison sentences of up to 10 years. A citizen's complaints bureau has been set up by the Head of State to receive complaints from citizens alleging

torture and inhumane treatment at the hands of the security officers. This is one of the most effective positive decisions of the Revolution in the field of human rights.

18. When the National Salvation Revolution assumed power in 1989, it passed three Constitutional Decrees which dealt with the following matters:

(a) Constitutional Decree No. 1 (30 June 1989) was concerned with legislative and political matters within the context of the legitimacy of the regime. It therefore abolished the existing legislative and political organs and replaced them with its own.

(b) Constitutional Decree No. 2 (30 June 1989) was mainly concerned with the completion of the process of liquidation of the existing political and social institutions. Thus political parties and trade unions were abolished. Many restrictions were imposed, which affected some fundamental rights. The Decree dealt also with some organizational matters of the State.

(c) Constitutional Decree No. 3 dealt with a variety of issues including organizational matters and some exceptional measures such as the declaration of the state of emergency.

19. It is to be observed that the main aim of the above three Decrees was the abolition of the political administrative institutions under the old regime and the adoption of some tough security measures to protect the regime in its infancy.

20. When the transitional period was over, the Revolution grew confident in itself, having entrenched itself and having gained wide recognition from the people of its legitimacy in its own right. Constitutional Decree No. 4 (4 February 1991) was passed establishing a federal system of government, as being the most suitable for the Sudan in response to the demands of the South.

21. Constitutional Decree No. 5 (31 December 1991) was passed with the intention of widening the scope of people's participation in the administration and running of the political affairs of the country. Almost all shades of political opinion are now represented within the Assembly.

22. It has to be borne in mind that these Decrees were of a transitional nature and had as their main aim the deterrence of any possible opponents of the Revolution. Now, however, the Revolution has bypassed that stage and is much more relaxed. The restrictions referred to under the above-mentioned Decrees are no longer being rigorously applied. The handing over of power to civilian rule, within the next few years, is even being openly contemplated.

23. One area of concern to the United Nations is the position Sudanese women occupy in society. There are numerous provisions in almost all the Sudanese laws regulating women's place in society, in such diverse fields as employment, personal matters, and the right to vote and contest elections for membership of legislative bodies. Women's rights have been guaranteed, in complete equality with men, in all walks of life, politically, socially, economically and culturally. All successive Constitutions of the Sudan since 1956 have embodied provisions to that effect, in conformity with

international human rights instruments and customs. Matters falling within the ambit of family life, such as marriage, divorce and inheritance, are governed by the personal law of each religion.

24. The Muslim Personal Law of 1991, does not give women the right to divorce themselves from their husbands, except under certain conditions. This is a prerogative of men, as dictated by Shari'a.

25. Sudanese law gives women the right to own property separately and the right of litigation in matters regarding property. This right has been enshrined in all Sudanese Constitutions. Furthermore, equal pay for equal work and retirement benefits are provided under the Public Service Law. Successive Sudanese Constitutions have also guaranteed the right of women to special holidays. The Sudanese legislative has always observed all the instruments adopted by the ILO regarding the employment of women in factories and dangerous places of work.

26. The laws that guarantee women's rights in the Sudan are: the Muslim Personal Law, 1992; the Public Service Law 1991; the Public Service Pensions Law, 1975; the Social Security Law, 1991; the Employees Trade Unions Law, 1991; the Individual Labour Relations Act, 1981; the Sudan Transitional Constitution, 1985; the Permanent Constitution of the Sudan, 1973; the Provisional Constitution of the Sudan, 1956; the Provisional Constitution of the Sudan, Amendment of 1964; and the Draft Permanent Constitution of the Sudan, 1984. All the rights of women guaranteed under the above-named Constitutions apply equally to all women in any part of the Sudan, without discrimination regarding race, national origin or colour.

PART II

INFORMATION IN RELATION TO ARTICLES 2 TO 7 OF THE CONVENTION

Article 2

Racial discrimination by groups

27. It is now an offence under the new Penal Code, 1991, punishable by law, for any group of persons to incite violence against another group on account of race, colour, national or ethnic origin or descent. But ethnic fights do flare up at times in the rural areas amongst nomads, over water and grazing areas. In the Sudan, however, all unregistered land is State-owned and there is therefore no legal ground for any group to discriminate against any other group under the laws in force.

Freedom of movement

28. Freedom of movement within the country is a basic right enjoyed by all Sudanese. There are no restricted areas which some Sudanese are prohibited from entering. Thus hotels, restaurants, all means of transport, clubs, etc., are open to all. Indeed, apartheid-style restrictions do not exist in the Sudan. Any Sudanese can travel freely, settle anywhere in the Sudan and get involved in the local activities, politically, culturally and socially, without discrimination.

Encouragement of integration policies

29. Because of the increased mobility and social awareness of the population, the process of national integration is being accelerated. Now, practically every gathering, assembly, trade union, government department, army, police force and school, particularly in the central part of the Sudan, is mixed to a varying degree. This is true of Khartoum State and reflects the complex nature of the society, which renders it increasingly difficult if not impossible to speak of groups in purely racial, cultural, ethnic or religious terms, only.

30. In Northern Sudan it is not uncommon to find dark-skinned and fair-coloured brothers having the same parents. This fact has helped to diminish racial and ethnic prejudices and sensitivities.

Mixed marriages

31. At present, mixed marriages between different ethnic and racial groups or groups of different national origins are not only being encouraged but have become a fact of life, largely because of rising social awareness, economic mobility and expanding urbanization.

32. The Muslim Personal Law, 1992, has actually been developed and simplified, and this partly explains the incidence of mixed marriages. What is now required for two Muslims to get married is simply for them to be righteous practising Muslims and for the husband to have the financial ability

to support the wife. Under the old law, social status and family background were often discriminatory obstacles to the consummation of marriages in the Sudan.

Social and cultural development

33. In Khartoum, government policies seek the equitable distribution of scholarships, for study abroad and at home, between the different States in the Sudan. This process ensures that all ethnic and cultural groups get an equal chance for further development. This is in line with the principle, enforced by the courts, of the equality of all Sudanese before the law in terms of rights and obligations.

34. Because of the raging war in the South, however, nothing substantial can be done to alleviate social backwardness. The backward areas, such as the South and some parts of Northern Sudan, nevertheless do participate in all the cultural activities at the national and regional levels. These include folkloric dancing and other forms of cultural expression.

35. The University of Juba has now organized a special enrolment programme for mature students recruited from amongst working government officials. The programme is confined to this University and seeks to upgrade the skills and standards of this particular group of citizens. It is one method of alleviating the prevalent social and educational injustices, caused by long years of political instability.

Participation in politics

36. After the advent of the national Salvation Revolution, in 1989, party politics were abolished following the failure to address issues of vital importance to the Sudanese masses, such as economic development and lack of a clear-cut strategy for solving the problem of Southern Sudan.

37. However, all Sudanese in their individual capacities, not as representatives of political parties or groups, are free to participate in the organizations of the Revolution, without discrimination on any grounds. They can vote and contest elections for membership of any organ of the Revolution, such as the popular committees, popular congresses or sectoral conferences.

38. The equality of all Sudanese in the exercise of these rights has been provided for under the resolutions of the National Dialogue Conference on the Political System in the Sudan, convened from 21 October to 12 November 1989.

Article 3

39. Since the advent of the Egyptian conquest of the Sudan in the nineteenth century, the Sudanese people have always displayed a high degree of political awareness, an awareness later rekindled by the rise of Mahdism. When the wind of freedom blew through Africa, the Sudan was amongst the first nations to gain independence.

40. The Sudan has, since then, consistently called for the total boycott and isolation of "apartheid South Africa" in international circles, militarily,

economically, culturally and in the field of sports. Not only that, it has called for the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations, and has never had any contact whatsoever with that country.

41. It enacted the South Africa Boycott Act as far back as 1961, and has marked every occasion involving South Africa and glorifying the African peoples' struggle against colonialism and apartheid, such as the Sharpeville massacre day, and the International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling People of South Africa. It had always done this by releasing an official statement on the occasion, accompanied by the widest possible press, television and radio coverage of the events in South Africa.

42. The Sudan has also always called for majority rule on the basis of one man one vote.

43. The Sudan has signed and ratified the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

44. The Sudan was in the vanguard of the African countries that received South African refugees as far as 1964, although it does not share borders with South Africa. It consistently supported the liberation movements in Southern Africa, particularly the African National Congress and Pan-African Congress, both as an individual country and through the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity in Dar es Salaam. Recently, the University of Khartoum awarded Mr. Nelson Mandela an honorary doctorate degree in law in recognition of his role in the struggle against apartheid and colonialism.

45. It is therefore unthinkable that the Sudan could afford to entertain policies of the nature of apartheid on any land under its jurisdiction.

Article 4

Theories of racial superiority

46. The majority of Sudanese people are practising Muslims, and Islam prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, colour or ethnic or national origin. Observance of such ideals is prevalent in Sudanese society. Furthermore, the equality of all Sudanese before the law, in terms of obligations and rights, has always been observed by Sudanese courts in the application of laws and the administration of justice.

47. As a matter of fact, questions of racial divisions and racial superiority and inferiority have become less important because most of the population in the Northern and Central parts of the Sudan is the result of a fusion between Arabs and Africans. Pure Arabs in the North are a negligible portion of the population, whereas in the South of the country, Nuba mountains, Dar Fur and Southern Blue Nile areas, most of the people are of African stock, but there cannot be any claims to racial purity here, either.

48. Article 64 of the new Penal Code, 1991, specifically addresses a situation where any group of persons might disturb communal peace and harmony on the basis of racial and ethnic prejudices. Such an act is now an offence, punishable by law.

49. Banks in the Sudan strictly follow business rules in their dealings with the public, and no racial, ethnic or religious prejudices are involved. Likewise, the acquisition of land is free to all, without restriction. Many citizens from Southern Sudan have now acquired plots of land in the North, for example in Khartoum State and elsewhere, without facing any discrimination.

Mixed marriages across racial barriers

50. There are now many marriages across racial barriers, and they are on the increase. For a non-Muslim wishing to marry the daughter of an Arab Muslim, the only requirements are conversion to Islam and the financial ability to maintain the spouse. Christians do not necessarily require Muslims to convert to Christianity in order to marry their daughters, but this is not a general rule.

Employment

51. Employment is regulated by the Public Service Law, 1991, which ensures equal opportunity for all citizens without nepotism and without discrimination or favouritism on account of race, sex, ethnic or national origin. The law provides that the only criteria for employment are the competitiveness and efficiency of the applicants, on the basis of absolute equality. There is no mention of religion, race or national origin on the application forms or on any other documents connected with employment. The law also provides that all vacant posts should be advertised in the mass media, for example for the recruitment of new diplomats into the foreign service. Other matters, such as remunerations, holidays, pensions and retirement benefits, equal pay for equal work, and promotions, are regulated by the same law.

Article 5

52. As far as the administration of justice is concerned, Sudanese and foreigners alike are equal before the law.

53. Both in the Arab and African traditional communities the neighbour is respected and protected, a fact amply expressed in the folk-songs of the various Sudanese ethnic groups. This explains why the respect foreigners enjoy in the Sudan is unequalled elsewhere in the world.

Foreigners and refugees

54. There is a large foreign community in the Sudan consisting mostly of Nigerians, Ethiopians, Chadians, nationals of the Niger, Egyptians, Greeks, Syrians, Italians, Armenians, Zairians, Lebanese and Yemenites, living in remarkable harmony with the Sudanese. The Sudanese are generally proud and hospitable, and they hold no grudges or prejudices against foreigners on Sudanese land. This also explains the long-term presence of large numbers of refugees from all the neighbouring countries of the Sudan. There are millions

of refugees. The Sudan is a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and its Protocol (1967), as well as to the OAU Convention governing the specific aspects of refugee problems in Africa (1969). Article 33 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees prohibits handing refugees over to their country of origin if they sought asylum for political reasons. The Sudan thus abides by its international obligations under international law, and no racial or other prejudicial considerations whatsoever are involved in this process.

Freedom of movement

55. Any Sudanese citizen is free under the law to travel abroad or within the country, without restriction. This is a right that has been provided for under the Passports and Immigrations Act, 1970. However, a prerequisite to going abroad is the possession of a return air ticket, in order to avoid unnecessary exposure to suffering away from home.

56. By virtue of their physiological weaknesses, women do face some additional conditions that have to be met before they are allowed to travel abroad. These restrictions are on religious grounds.

57. The nationality of any Sudanese and his right to return home at any time are protected and inalienable rights that no one can deny him. The 1957 Nationality Act requires the Minister of the Interior to issue a nationality certificate to anyone who is Sudanese by birth and who requests such a certificate.

Inheritance and ownership of property

58. Inheritance, and joint and individual ownership of property are all rights that are protected in the Quran, and the present laws of the Sudan are based on the Quran.

Health care

59. The right to free education and the right to health care are two of the most important rights that all segments of the society have enjoyed since independence (1956-1992), without discrimination.

60. Women and children constitute more than 60 per cent of the population and they are the most vulnerable to health problems, for reasons connected with growth and development. Mortality rates are high in these sectors of society, probably among the highest in the world. Services rendered to these two groups include care for mothers during pregnancy and immunization of both mothers and children.

61. There are nation-wide national health programmes for these two groups, thus ensuring racial equality in the enjoyment of this right by women. The 1988 Annual Statistical Report contains a lot of useful data concerning the general distribution of health care and medical services.

62. The graphs and statistics indicating the work of the national Ministry of Health in action in the various States are impressive. In spite of clear

disparities in the volume of services rendered to each region, there is a real effort to serve everyone in the Sudan. Thus, public hospitals, private clinics and hospitals are open to all, without discrimination.

63. There is now a national strategy to provide every citizen with adequate medical services by the year 2000. For instance, the four-year plan, 1987-1991, aimed at improving the health statistics of the population and achieved the following results.

	1987	1991
Infant mortality rate per 1 000 live births	140	120
Child (1-4 years) mortality per 1 000	19	15
Crude death rate per 1 000	17	14
Maternal mortality rate per 1 000 live births	20	15
Life expectancy at birth (years)	48	55

Freedom of thought

64. As far as freedom of thought is concerned, the only restriction is that the abandonment of Islam and the embracing of another faith constitutes the crime of apostasy in Islam, which is punishable by death. No one dare change that. There is no discrimination here, however, since this restriction affects only Muslims, regardless of their race, colour or national origin.

Freedom of opinion

65. At present, any Sudanese citizen can freely express his or her opinion in the press and within the legislative bodies and all the organizations of the Revolution, such as the popular committees and the steering committee of the various trade unions. In the latter, stress is placed on consensus rather than wild selfish competition amongst members, a process which encourages corruption, as well as racial and ethnic prejudices.

66. Under the rules of procedure of the Transitional National Assembly and the popular committees, members are immune from questioning regarding the opinions they express within these bodies.

Housing policies

67. There have been three national housing plans since the Sudan gained its independence in 1956, namely, the ten-year plan (1961-1970), the five-year plan (1971-1976), and the six-year plan (1977-1983). These plans centred on the distribution of plots of land to the citizens in the towns and villages. The criterion followed in the allotment of the plots was based on the annual income of the recipient of the plot. That criterion divided citizens into three categories (high income, medium income and low income) in order to indicate the class, area, types of building materials and standard of services

to be rendered. The criterion was appropriate because it was not discriminatory on the grounds of race, ethnicity, skin colour, sex or national origin.

Social security

68. The Ministry of Development and Social Welfare is the primary national institution catering for the needs of the down-trodden poor of the society. The budgets of this Ministry always include special funds for helping the poor, both at the national and regional levels.

69. At present more than 800,000 families get some form of assistance monthly from the Ministry. The choice of these families has never and shall never be based on race, colour, religion, national origin or sex, but rather on whether the recipient meets the poverty conditions prescribed by the Ministry of Development and Social Welfare.

Article 6

70. It is the responsibility of the Government of the Sudan to protect all people within its jurisdiction whether they are citizens of the Sudan or foreigners. Criminal justice is regulated by the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, both of 1991. There is no possibility of excluding any person from the protection of these laws. The police case diaries do not contain any information on the racial or ethnic group, religion or national origin of the accused or the witnesses. They are concerned with the substance of the case and such other matters as address and occupation.

71. The same applies in the case of admission of students to institutions of learning; race, sex and national origin do not come into play at all.

Composition of courts

72. In the choice of the personnel composing national courts and tribunals, preference is based purely on qualifications and experience, irrespective of sex, race, national origin or religion. It follows that all the races and religions of which the population of the Sudan is made up are represented in the composition of most courts and tribunals, anywhere in the Sudan, from the lowest grade of courts up to the highest court of law in the country. The police are also, in the majority of cases, of different racial, religious cultural and ethnic origins. This fact is conspicuously demonstrated in Khartoum state.

Article 7

Education

73. In the field of education, the Ministry of Education pays special attention to the healthy upbringing of the young by making them aware of their immediate surroundings and the world at large. For instance, the new books of the Ministry largely take their themes and illustrations from the Sudanese environment, thus reflecting all the existing cultural, ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds of the Sudanese people. The coexistence of various racial or ethnic groups and cultures, often in a remarkable atmosphere of

friendliness, free from prejudices of any kind, is amply reflected in the new books. An illustration of this is the "Sudan Practical Integrated National English Series" prepared by the Institute of Education. Bakht-er-Ruda.

74. In order to place the noble objectives of the educational system of the Sudan on solid ground, the Organization of General Education Law was promulgated in 1992. General education is divided into two parts, formal and informal. Formal education is divided into basic and secondary education, whereas informal education comprises within it nursery schools, pre-school Quranic schools (khalawa), adult education, vocational training, technical schools, training centres, and nutrition and farming centres.

Private schools

75. The setting up of private schools is permitted under the law, consequently religious classes, evening classes and training institutes, as well as schools established by the various foreign communities, are found all over the country.

Encouragement of interaction between different ethnic groups and cultures

76. In order to create an atmosphere conducive to the positive encouragement of social interaction among children from different regional and cultural backgrounds, youth festivals as well as inter-state and inter-school sports contests are organized all the year round. These occasions help remove possible racial prejudices and promote understanding, friendship and the feeling of togetherness among the children.

77. A tradition has evolved whereby a limited number of brilliant students from Southern Sudan are admitted to some of the prestigious secondary schools in Northern Sudan. Recently, the Ministry of Education in Khartoum abolished the special schools which had been established for students from Southern Sudan, who had been displaced by war, and offered them places in Northern secondary schools. The change was dictated by the desire to prevent possible neglect of these students and remove the disadvantages that they could face, coming from the South and being strangers in Khartoum.

78. Article 4 of the relevant law reads as follows: "to inculcate into the children religious teachings, high ideals of the society, good behaviour, a sense of responsibility based on love, self-sacrifice for the general good of the society and strong allegiance to the nation". The same Article further states that the aim is to develop the child's awareness, love and interest in matters connected with humanity in general. He is made aware of the importance of a clean environment and that the skills he acquires in various fields can contribute positively to the development of others.

79. In order to remove any possible racial tendencies and prejudices in the setting of educational policies and syllabuses, all the regions, representing the different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, are represented on the syllabus committee so as to reflect fairly the various cultural, ethnic and geographical backgrounds.

Arabic language

80. Article 4 C (d) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1991, provides that the Arabic language, the national language of the State, should be used in all criminal judicial procedures, but this Article allows the use of any other language as may be necessary. The Arabic language is also the medium of instruction in schools at all levels of education in the Sudan, but appropriate techniques had to be devised for the introduction of Arabic to the children of non-Arabic speaking Sudanese, mostly in Southern Sudan and in some parts of Northern Sudan. These elaborate arrangements regarding the use of the Arabic language are dictated by the fact that the Sudanese population is multi-racial, and numerous other languages are spoken in many parts of the country.

Council for International Peoples Friendship

81. Apart from efforts at the national level to create generations of Sudanese citizens full of ideals based on racial and religious tolerance, a Council for International Peoples Friendship has been formed to meet the need for a popular unofficial diplomatic channel to cement possible gaps in Sudan's external relations with the various peoples of the world. There are also numerous friendship societies between the Sudan and many foreign States.

Religion

82. Under the new curriculum, religious education has now been made compulsory in schools, at all levels of general education, for both Muslims and Christians. The aim is clear: to inculcate in the young the ideals of justice, righteousness and the equality of all races.

Foreign languages

83. In this context, the scope of the learning of foreign languages has been enlarged to include more foreign languages, and children are made to understand that the world is one family living in a state of complex interdependency.

The Sudan's National Education Curriculum

84. In a draft National Educational Curriculum, which has been prepared and is awaiting implementation, emphasis has been placed on the ancient immigration flows to the Sudan and the long slow process of ethnic, religious, cultural and social integration that eventually produced the present complex characteristics of most parts of the Sudan.

85. As a matter of practice and culture, Sudanese children are introduced to the world around them at an early stage, particularly the Arab world, Africa, and the United Nations system. Problems such as those of occupied Palestine and "apartheid South Africa", the issues evoked by International and Arab Child Day and the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, and problems connected with refugees are all familiar to them because the Sudan hosts nearly 2.5 million refugees.

86. When marking United Nations days, the main features of the Charter of the United Nations and the United Nations system in general, including United Nations conventions and declarations, are also explained to the children. Such awareness is also expressed within the context of the special attention that the Sudan pays to the struggle against apartheid, racism and zionism. A clear manifestation of this attitude is that the Sudanese people are never antagonistic towards foreigners. On the contrary, they are usually friendly and hospitable, a fact known all over the world.